S. No. 2974
H. No. 9726

Republic of the Philippines

Congress of the Philippines

Metro Manila

Nineteenth Congress

Third Regular Session

Begun and held in Metro Manila, on Monday, the twenty-second day of July, two thousand twenty-four.

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 12310]

AN ACT EXPANDING THE PHILIPPINE SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL (PSHS) SYSTEM, FURTHER STRENGTHENING ITS GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT, REPEALING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8496 OR THE "PHILIPPINE SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM ACT OF 1997", AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the "Expanded Philippine Science High School (PSHS) System Act".

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to promote science and technology (S&T), research and development, invention, innovation, and utilization. The State recognizes the need to enhance Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education, training, and services, and support appropriate and self-reliant scientific and technological capabilities and their application to increase productivity and enhance the quality of life for everyone. To this end, the State hereby establishes a PSHS System that will assume a leadership role in secondary STEM education.

SEC. 3. *Objectives.* – This Act aims to achieve the following objectives:

(a) Establish strategically accessible PSHS campuses that provide scholarship-based secondary education programs with special emphasis on STEM for students with exceptional aptitude in science and mathematics;

(b) Increase the pool of high school graduates who will pursue undergraduate courses in the field of STEM, research and development, or careers in S&T;

(c) Consolidate existing and future campuses under a unified system of governance and management to ensure consistent quality standards and efficient operations;

(d) Support the holistic development of scholars, faculty, and staff by facilitating and encouraging participation in international collaborations, local and international competitions, academic symposia, research projects, and other similar activities; and

(e) Ensure that students with exceptional aptitude in science and mathematics are given equal scholarship opportunities to enroll in the PSHS System.

SEC. 4. *Definition of Terms.* – As used in this Act:

(a) *Administrative regions* refer to the regions where the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) holds regional offices;

(b) *Careers in S&T* refer to the pursuit of professions in the fields of basic and applied sciences, such as STEM education and other disciplines approved by the PSHS Board of Trustees created in this Act;

(c) *Philippine Science High Schools (PSHS)* refer to secondary schools offering scholarship-based education to qualified students with exceptional aptitude in STEM to prepare them for careers in S&T;

(d) *Qualified students* refer to those who qualify for admission through the PSHS National Competitive Examination or other similar admission processes approved by the Board, including, but not limited to, the Lateral Admission Qualifying Examination (LAQE), and Requirement for Admission, Criteria, and Evaluation (RACE);

(e) *Scholarship* refers to the awards or grants for secondary education given by the PSHS to deserving students; and

(f) *Term of office* refers to the period fixed by this Act within which a public official may hold office.

SEC. 5. *Establishment and Expansion of the PSHS.* – A PSHS System shall be established under the administrative supervision of the DOST composed of at least two (2) PSHS campuses in each administrative region of the country: *Provided,* That PSHS campuses within the same region shall not be situated in the same province or city in the case of the National Capital Region: *Provided, further,* That the establishment of additional campuses shall be subject to a comprehensive review based on need, demand, and other criteria determined by the PSHS Board.

SEC. 6. *PSHS System Campuses.* – The PSHS System shall be composed of the existing PSHS campuses and future campuses that shall be established pursuant to this Act. The existing sixteen (16) campuses shall be known as follows:

(a) Philippine Science High School – Main Campus in Diliman, Quezon City;

(b) Philippine Science High School – Cordillera Administrative Region Campus in Baguio City, formerly Philippine Science High School – Cordillera Administrative Region Campus;

(c) Philippine Science High School – Ilocos Region Campus in Ilocos Sur, formerly Philippine Science High School – Ilocos Region Campus;

(d) Philippine Science High School – Cagayan Valley Campus in Nueva Vizcaya, formerly Philippine Science High School – Cagayan Valley Campus;

(e) Philippine Science High School – Central Luzon Campus in Clark Freeport Zone, formerly Philippine Science High School – Central Luzon Campus;

(f) Philippine Science High School – CALABARZON Region Campus in Batangas City, formerly Philippine Science High School – CALABARZON Region Campus;

(g) Philippine Science High School – MIMAROPA Region Campus in Romblon, formerly Philippine Science High School – MIMAROPA Region Campus;

(h) Philippine Science High School – Bicol Region Campus in Camarines Sur, formerly Philippine Science High School – Bicol Region Campus;

(i) Philippine Science High School – Western Visayas Campus in Iloilo City, formerly Philippine Science High School – Western Visayas Campus;

(j) Philippine Science High School – Central Visayas Campus in Cebu, formerly Philippine Science High School – Central Visayas Campus;

(k) Philippine Science High School – Eastern Visayas Campus in Leyte, formerly Philippine Science High School – Eastern Visayas Campus;

(l) Philippine Science High School – Zamboanga Peninsula Region Campus in Dipolog City, formerly Philippine Science High School – Zamboanga Peninsula Region Campus;

(m) Philippine Science High School – Northern Mindanao Campus in Lanao del Norte, formerly Philippine Science High School – Central Mindanao Campus;

(n) Philippine Science High School – Davao Region Campus in Davao City, formerly Philippine Science High School – Southern Mindanao Campus;

(o) Philippine Science High School – SOCCSKSARGEN Region Campus in Koronadal City, formerly Philippine Science High School – SOCCSKSARGEN Region Campus; and

(p) Philippine Science High School – CARAGA Region Campus in Butuan City, formerly Philippine Science High School – CARAGA Region Campus.

A new Philippine Science High School campus in the Negros Island Region shall also be established.

In the establishment of future PSHS campuses, the PSHS System Board of Trustees may consider the following locations: First District of Aklan; Polangui, Albay; Ubay, Bohol; Laoag City, Ilocos Norte; Labangan, Zamboanga del Sur; Third District of Cagayan; General Santos City, South Cotabato; and Bukidnon.

SEC. 7. *Restriction on the Conversion and Inclusion of High Schools into a PSHS Campus.* – The conversion and inclusion of existing high schools into the PSHS System shall not be allowed.

SEC. 8. *Creation of the PSHS Board of Trustees.* – There shall be created a Board of Trustees, hereinafter referred to as the Board, composed of the following members:

(a) Secretary of Science and Technology, as *ex officio* Chairperson;

(b) Secretary of Education, as *ex officio* Vice Chairperson;

(c) President of the University of the Philippines;

(d) Executive Director of the PSHS;

(e) Director of the Science Education Institute;

(f) President of the PSHS National Alumni Association;

(g) Chairpersons of the Committees on Science and Technology of the Senate and the House of Representatives, as *ex officio* members;

(h) One (1) representative each from the private sector, representing higher education, child development professionals or practitioners, industry, agriculture, and new emerging technologies.

The private sector representatives shall be appointed by the Board upon recommendation of a duly constituted search committee. The private sector representatives shall serve a term of four (4) years.

SEC. 9. *Powers and Functions of the PSHS Board of Trustees.* – The Board shall exercise the following powers and functions:

(a) Formulate policies, guidelines, and criteria for the establishment, administration, operation, monitoring, and evaluation of PSHS campuses to ensure consistent quality standards;

(b) Identify additional PSHS campuses as provided under Section 5 of this Act, and the naming or renaming of existing or future campuses;

(c) Formulate policies for the increase in enrollment in the PSHS System;

(d) Approve the curriculum developed by the Executive Committee under Section 16 of this Act;

(e) Approve the criteria for the selection, admission, and lateral transfer of students;

(f) Approve the grant and termination of scholarships, including stipends and allowances for students;

(g) Approve the graduation of successful candidates from various PSHS campuses;

(h) Approve policies and disciplinary rules for students, faculty members, and staff;

(i) Approve the organizational structure and staffing pattern of the PSHS System as prepared by the Executive Director, subject to the Revised Compensation and Position Classification System, civil service laws, rules and regulations, and other relevant laws;

(j) Formulate policies on appointment, promotion, retention or renewal of contracts, compensation, removal for just cause, rewards, incentives, and other conditions of employment;

(k) Approve the selection criteria for Executive Director, Deputy Executive Directors, and Campus Directors, and the selection of teaching and non-teaching personnel;

(l) Appoint the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Directors, and Campus Directors;

(m) Reorganize the composition of the Executive Committee and other committees;

(n) Approve the extension of services of faculty members over the age of sixty-five (65) up to the age of seventy (70) pursuant to Republic Act No. 8439 or the "Magna Carta for Scientists, Engineers, Researchers and other S&T Personnel in the Government", as amended;

(o) Receive and appropriate for purposes herein specified such sums as may be provided by law for the support of the PSHS System;

(p) Receive grants, bequests, endowments, gifts, donations, and contributions of cash and real and personal properties of all kinds, and administer the same for the benefit of the PSHS System or for aid to any of its students;

(q) Authorize the utilization of income generated by the PSHS System to support its functions, and of donations

received in trust by individual campuses, in accordance with the donor's specified purpose and the intended use of the donation: *Provided,* That for income or donations not designated for a particular campus, the Board shall allocate such income or donation for the benefit of the PSHS System or any of its campuses, as the Board may deem appropriate;

(r) Receive support under the "Adopt-A-School Program" for the improvement of its learning research facilities and related activities;

(s) Approve partnerships and collaborations entered into by the PSHS System and its campuses with local and international institutions; and

(t) Perform such other functions as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 10. *Executive Director.* – The PSHS System shall be headed by an Executive Director who shall exercise academic and administrative supervision over all campuses and coordinate the implementation of policies and guidelines set by the Board.

The Executive Director, who shall be appointed by the Board for a term of six (6) years and may be reappointed for another term of six (6) years in accordance with the guidelines and qualifications set forth in the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of this Act, must have an advanced degree in the field of STEM and substantial experience in managing an educational institution. The Executive Director shall have the rank, privileges, and emoluments of Director V and a salary grade of thirty (30).

The Executive Director shall be allowed to complete the term of six (6) years even upon reaching the mandatory age of retirement but shall no longer be eligible for reappointment for another term.

SEC. 11. *Duties and Functions of the Executive Director.* – The Executive Director shall perform the following duties and functions:

(a) Coordinate the implementation of Board-approved admission processes, criteria, and standards;

(b) Facilitate and coordinate curriculum planning, review and evaluation activities, and research-based development in the PSHS System;

(c) Monitor, coordinate, and evaluate research projects and initiatives in all PSHS campuses;

(d) Manage the registration of intellectual property, prototype development, and the commercialization or adoption of research outputs of students;

(e) Provide legal and technical assistance to students, faculty members, and staff of the PSHS System in line with their studies and official functions;

(f) Establish strategic linkages, and coordinate exchange and training programs with local and international partners to enhance the expertise and competencies of students, faculty members, and staff;

(g) Facilitate networking and sharing of resources, expertise, equipment, and technology across PSHS campuses with partner institutions to ensure access to advanced tools and facilities that support academic and research excellence;

(h) Supervise the development of a systemwide outreach program to upgrade STEM education, extend support to PSHS campuses, and facilitate partnerships with the Department of Education Science High Schools and Special Science Elementary and High School Programs within the capabilities and resources of various science high school campuses;

(i) Recommend to the Board the organizational structure and staffing pattern of the PSHS System;

(j) Serve as secretariat to the Board; and

(k) Perform such other functions as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this Act.

In view of the expansion of the PSHS System, the office of the Executive Director shall be provided with additional plantilla positions to be determined by the Executive Director and approved by the Board.

SEC. 12. *Deputy Executive Directors.* – There shall be three (3) Deputy Executive Directors, with the rank of Director IV and a salary grade of twenty-eight (28) who shall assist the Executive Director, under the following services: (a) Academic and Student Services; (b) Administration and Finance; and (c) Research, Innovation and Linkages. The Deputy Executive Directors shall be appointed by the Board for a term of six (6) years and may be reappointed for another term of six (6) years in accordance with the guidelines and qualifications set forth in the IRR of this Act, preferably holding an advanced degree in the field of STEM, and substantial experience in managing an educational institution.

The Board shall define the scope of their respective offices and their duties and functions.

The Deputy Executive Directors shall be allowed to complete the term of six (6) years even upon reaching the mandatory age of retirement but shall no longer be eligible for reappointment for another term.

SEC. 13. *Campus Directors of the PSHS System Campuses.* – Each PSHS campus shall have a Campus Director who shall serve as the administrative and academic head and shall be responsible for day-to-day operations. The Campus Director may constitute a consultative body to act as a citizen's arm to assess and determine the educational needs of the campus service area.

The Campus Director shall be appointed by the Board, upon the recommendation of the Executive Director, for a term of six (6) years and may be reappointed for another term of six (6) years in accordance with the guidelines and qualifications set forth in the IRR of this Act, preferably holding an advanced degree in the field of STEM, and substantial experience in managing an educational institution.

The Campus Director shall be allowed to complete the term of six (6) years even upon reaching the mandatory age of retirement but shall no longer be eligible for reappointment for another term.

SEC. 14. *Filling-Up of Vacancy.* – In the event of a vacancy in the position of Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director and Campus Director, the replacement or new appointee's term of office shall be considered as a new appointment and shall serve for a full term.

SEC. 15. *Organizational Structure and Staffing Pattern.* – The Executive Director shall prepare the organizational structure and staffing pattern required for the expanded PSHS System, including additional plantilla positions, reclassification or staffing modifications, and qualifications of the PSHS System personnel in accordance with the Revised Compensation and Position Classification System, civil service laws, rules, regulations, and other relevant issuances, taking into consideration the specialized science teacher status of faculty members.

Upon approval of the Board, the organizational structure and staffing pattern shall be submitted to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) for review and approval. The PSHS System shall retain its existing organizational structure and staffing pattern pending approval by the DBM.

SEC. 16. *Executive Committee.* – There shall be an Executive Committee composed of the Executive Director as *ex officio* chairperson, the Deputy Executive Directors as *ex officio* members, and the Campus Directors and such other ranking PSHS System faculty members or officials as the Board may deem necessary, as members.

The Executive Committee shall develop and conduct a periodic review of the PSHS System curriculum and other training programs, and exercise such other functions, powers, and duties as the Board may prescribe.

SEC. 17. *Faculty Members Qualification.* – Faculty members of the PSHS System shall be exempt from any civil service examination or regulations as a requisite to

appointment. The same shall be selected in accordance with such criteria as may be formulated and approved by the Board, such as, but not limited to, screening and conduct of competitive examinations.

SEC. 18. *Exemption from Tax.* – All grants, bequests, endowments, gifts, donations and contributions made to and used actually, directly, and exclusively for educational purposes by the PSHS System shall be exempt from donor's tax and shall be considered as allowable deductions from gross income for purposes of computing the taxable income of the donor, pursuant to the provisions of Republic Act No. 8424 or the "National Internal Revenue Code of 1997", as amended.

Upon certification by the DOST, the importation of scientific and research equipment for educational purposes made by the PSHS System shall be exempt from the payment of taxes and customs duties in accordance with Republic Act No. 10863 or the "Customs Modernization and Tariff Act (CMTA)". Any taxes and duties on importations not covered by the said exemption shall be chargeable against the Tax Expenditure Fund under the General Appropriations Act (GAA).

SEC. 19. *Fallback Position.* – At the end of two (2) consecutive terms, the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director, or Campus Director may opt to remain with the PSHS System and occupy the highest faculty rank.

SEC. 20. *Transitory Provisions.* – Upon the effectivity of this Act, the following incumbent key officials of the PSHS System shall acquire new terms of office:

(a) Non *ex officio* members of the Board under Section 8 of this Act shall assume a term of four (4) years;

(b) The Executive Director, and Deputy Executive Directors, subject to meritorious performance and approval of the Board, shall assume a term of six (6) years, and may be renewed for another term of six (6) years; and

(c) Campus Directors, subject to meritorious performance and approval of the Board, shall assume a term of six (6) years, and may be renewed for another term of six (6) years.

SEC. 21. *Appropriations.* – The amount necessary to carry out the initial implementation of this Act shall be charged against the current year's appropriations of the PSHS System. Thereafter, such amount as may be needed for its continued operation shall be included in the annual GAA.

SEC. 22. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Board shall formulate the necessary rules and regulations to implement this Act.

SEC. 23. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional, the remainder hereof not otherwise affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SEC. 24. *Repealing Clause.* – Republic Act No. 3661 or "An Act to Establish the Philippine Science High School", and Republic Act No. 8496 or the "Philippine Science High School (PSHS) System Act of 1997", as amended by Republic Act No. 9036, are hereby repealed. All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, letters of instruction, proclamations or administrative regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby amended, repealed, or modified accordingly.

SEC. 25. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,

FERDINAND MARTIN G. ROMUALDEZ
Speaker of the House of Representatives

FRANCIS "CHIZ" G. ESCUDERO
President of the Senate

This Act, which is a consolidation of Senate Bill No. 2974 and House Bill No. 9726, was passed by the Senate of the Philippines and the House of Representatives on June 9, 2025 and June 10, 2025, respectively.

REGINALD S. VELASCO
Secretary General
House of Representatives

RENATO N. BANTUG JR.
Secretary of the Senate

Approved: OCT 0 3 2025

FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.
President of the Philippines

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

PBBM010212